

**Cape Ann Emergency Planning Team
Board of Directors Meeting
May 9, 2013
Gloucester City Hall**

Present

Dan Doucette, Tom Kehoe, Eric Smith, Mayor Kirk, Karin Carroll on behalf of Noreen Burke, Charlie Vose, Mike Main, Steve Napoli, Sander Schultz, and Bud Holden.

8:00 AM meeting called to order by Dan Doucette.

Introductions

Minutes: A motion was presented to accept April 4, 2013 meeting minutes. Minutes approved.

Old Business

- Full Certification Application- Full certification was accepted by MEMA, a formal letter will be received in the near future. With certification the CAEPT will be able to apply for grants to pay for website maintenance, drills, and other operational items. The website hosting fee is \$140/year.

Dan Doucette stated that a drill is part of the MEMA certification process. It does not necessarily have to take place in Gloucester and it does not have to be a shelter drill. He clarified that the CAEPT is not looking to dictate policy for the various communities involved in the CAEPT, rather support their emergency planning efforts. Tom Kehoe suggested hosting the drill in Manchester or Essex. Charlie Vose emphasized the importance of planning and drilling in the event there is a need to respond and discussed drills performed by other agencies.

Mayor Kirk expressed her frustration with the current state of sheltering planning. She felt that in response to Nemo there were on the spot policies being determined and that O'Maley was prematurely labeled as a Mass Care Shelter. Mayor Kirk presented her Executive Order for Sheltering and Safe Areas of Refuge to the group and asked for feedback. Drilling the policy was suggested. Mayor Kirk added that the City of Gloucester's Legal Department is also reviewing the policy and all comments should be emailed to her.

Mayor Kirk continued by saying that during Nemo, MEMA advised cities to rely on regional shelters as Gloucester would not be opening Level 6 shelters on their own. Locally, there should be temporary safe areas, or "Personal Care Sites", where residents can safely stay in an emergency (see attached).

Steve Napoli stated Red Cross shelters were open in Methuen and Salisbury during Nemo. Red Cross shelters are not always close and will not always work for all Gloucester citizens. Steve Napoli claimed that Red Cross has a list of *potential* shelter sites, which means they *may* be utilized as a shelter, but does not guarantee that a shelter will be opened at that location. Charlie Vose added that Red Cross often waits for communities to step up and offer a shelter facility in an emergency.

Mayor Kirk stated that Red Cross needs to have a facility in Gloucester/Cape Ann that is approved for a shelter. There is currently no site in Gloucester. The goal is for O'Maley to be approved by Red Cross as a shelter site. Gloucester will be making improvements to O'Maley in order to make it a viable shelter site, but it does not want to replicate the services of Mass Care being provided by the Red Cross. O'Maley will be able to accommodate pets and medical needs. Charlie Vose added that the Red Cross may not always be able to get to Gloucester to provide Mass Care service.

Steve Napoli stated there are no formal requirements for a Safe Area and it is up to the City to define. Tom Kehoe asked that if the shelter is not for overnight accommodations, how is that expectation made clear to the public? Mayor Kirk responded that it would have to be stated that this is not a full shelter and that Red Cross has a Regional Shelter available. Steve Napoli is nervous about not having a specific site for a shelter on Cape Ann. Charlie Vose stated that O'Maley was recently surveyed as possible shelter site. Karin Carroll stated that research has demonstrated that people will not leave their pets in an emergency so pets must be planned for as well.

Sander Schultz thanked Mayor Kirk for attending this meeting and participating in the discussion. He added that safe areas may become full shelters if Red Cross is not available to come open a full shelter and transporting people to a regional shelter is not an option. Having a full shelter means planning for meals, medical needs, and pets. Mayor Kirk stated she will support a Safe Haven drill with NERAC.

Eric Smith stated that clarity is needed on exactly what services and when Red Cross will bring to the table for Gloucester.

Next meeting: Thursday, June 13, 2013, 8am in Manchester, site to be determined.

A motion was presented, seconded, and approved to adjourn the meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 8:55AM

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EXECUTIVE ORDER: Sheltering and Safe Area of Refuge Policy for the City of Gloucester - April 5, 2013 DRAFT

The City of Gloucester's policy on sheltering residents during emergencies shall be consistent with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) guidelines to municipalities. Depending on the nature of the emergency, the guidance may vary. The most recent guidance to municipalities during the NEMO blizzard of 2013 was for cities and towns to rely on regional shelters established by the American Red Cross, and for the local community to provide safe areas of refuge. The City of Gloucester adhered to this guidance during the NEMO blizzard.

Pursuant to the MEMA guidelines, the City of Gloucester will rely on the American Red Cross to provide the Emergency Support Function 6, MassCare, the responsibility for providing shelter. In furtherance of those guidelines the City of Gloucester will work to avoid the duplication of services and therefore rely on the American Red Cross to open, administer and operate all shelters.

Accordingly, the City of Gloucester through its public safety personnel will provide temporary safe areas of refuge for evacuation to a shelter. A safe area of refuge is an area designated to provide a temporary safe place designed to provide a place where the incident can be avoided and to temporary harbor people until transportation can be safely provided to an American Red Cross shelter. A safe area of refuge shall only be minimally equipped and not designed to shelter people.

This policy and implementation of the policy was discussed and agreed upon during NEMO blizzard emergency storm preparations. Participants in the emergency storm preparations included: The Mayor; Chief Administrative Officer; Fire Chief; Emergency Management Director; Public Health Director; Police Chief; City Solicitor; Chief Financial Officer; Superintendent of Schools; Assistant to the Emergency Management Director; Manager-Environmental Health Services; representatives of Addison Gilbert Hospital; and, others.

The plan for the implementation of the policy consists of the following:

1. Designated safe areas of refuge are identified as the Police Station for less than ten people requesting refuge; co-location with the EOC for less than twenty people seeking refuge; and, for over twenty people seeking refuge, Gloucester High School is the designated safe area of refuge unless flooding is a concern whereupon an alternative location will be identified.
2. Services requested for sheltering which go beyond providing safe areas of refuge shall be provided through the American Red Cross upon request or through their establishment of a regional shelter.
3. For reasons of personal safety, transportation within the city to the designated safe area of refuge shall be provided by city public safety personnel and vehicles.
4. There is a Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Gloucester and the Cape Ann Transportation Authority (CATA) for transportation from City of Gloucester designated departure points to a Red Cross shelter.

The designated safe areas of refuge are subject to change depending on the nature of the emergency. For example, the Rose Baker Senior Center can be utilized during summer months as a cooling center or a safe area of refuge from excessive heat. However, it cannot be used if there is a risk of prolonged power outages as a result of a storm due to its lack of generator power.

To summarize, the City of Gloucester is fully prepared to provide safe areas of refuge during emergency events, and will rely on the American Red Cross to provide more extensive sheltering services should the need arise.

This policy for sheltering and providing safe areas of refuge will be in effect until further notice.

Issued this Dayth day of Month, 2013.

Carolyn A. Kirk
Mayor